

From: **The Straight Dope** <reply@suntimesmail.com>

Date: Tue, Jan 7, 2014 at 4:48 PM

Subject: Important Message about your Straight Dope Account and Password 1/7/2014

To:



Our security team recently discovered that the Straight Dope message board forum was targeted and hacked. This resulted in the illegal acquisition of message board users' information, namely usernames, email addresses, and Straight Dope message board passwords. Given this incident, we recommend that you take the following steps as promptly as possible:

1. **Change your Straight Dope Password:** Visit the Straight Dope Message Board forums at <http://boards.straightdope.com/sdmb/profile.php?do=editpassword>. Please promptly choose a new password (do not use the same password you used with us previously). Changing your password will help ensure that your account is not used by an unauthorized individual.
2. **Protect Your Passwords Across the Web:** We highly recommend that if you used the same password on other online accounts or to access your email account, you choose a new password on those websites and for your email accounts. In general, security experts strongly recommend that you not use the same password across multiple websites (this includes not using the same password to access your email accounts).

All passwords in our system were protected using hashing, which is a scrambled version of your password. Thus if your password isn't very complex, the hacker could use brute force to figure out your password by trying lots of combinations. For this reason we recommend that you take the steps we have outlined above. In addition, we are taking several steps to prevent unauthorized access to our systems to protect your information. We are also working with law enforcement officials and conducting our own investigations. Go to http://www.straightdope.com/pages/about_identity_theft.html for other steps you can take to protect yourself when faced with potential identity theft, as well as helpful contact numbers where you can obtain more information about preventing identity theft.

We apologize for any inconvenience this has caused. As a reminder, the Straight Dope message board does not collect or store any social security numbers or credit card numbers, and thus no such information was impacted in this incident.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact our support team at 1-800- 645-0375 or support@straightdope.com.

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